

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, § 15-9-72 states that if a residential customer or applicant provides proof of identification under Section 15-9-53 (*Identification Required*), the City may accept the following forms of credit security:

- a record of satisfactory compliance with Section 15-9-75 (*Customer Payment Standards*), if applicable, and no outstanding utility invoices;
- a letter of reference from another electric, gas, or water utility with no record of late payments or outstanding balance, and no disconnections for non-payment during the last twelve consecutive billing cycles; or
- a refundable deposit of \$200; and

WHEREAS, § 15-9-75 (*Customer Payment Standards*) states that in order to establish compliance with customer payment standards, a residential customer must:

- have received utility service from the City for not fewer than 12 consecutive billing cycles;
- have paid each utility invoice before its due date during the preceding 12 calendar months;
- not have submitted a payment returned for insufficient funds; and
- not have committed unlawful use of service or utility service diversion; and

WHEREAS, some rental units include the cost of utility services owed by the tenant as a part of the total rent amount; and

WHEREAS, in these cases, a utility would not be able to provide a payment history for a specific tenant who resides on this type of property; and

WHEREAS, if a letter of recommendation from a utility cannot be obtained due to an individual's lease type, Austin Energy does not currently accept letters of recommendation from landlords as verification of an individual's payment history; and

WHEREAS, if an individual's landlord recommendation is not accepted and the individual does not have a history as an Austin Energy customer, the only option to gain utility service is through the payment of a \$200 deposit; and

WHEREAS, for many households, this deposit to acquire a basic utility service can be cost burdensome; and

WHEREAS, amending Section 15-9-72 could provide more options of proof for individuals who have a positive utility payment history but cannot provide a letter of recommendation from a utility; **NOW, THEREFORE:**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL:

The City Manager is directed to draft an ordinance for Council consideration amending Section 15-9-72 to allow appropriate documentation from landlords to be an acceptable form of credit security if the potential customer is unable to obtain a utility letter of recommendation because of the terms of the potential customer's prior lease.

ADOPTED: _____, 2017

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk